

The Civic Engagement Times

MAY/JUNE 2008

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

A Message from the Governor

Welcome to *The Civic Engagement Times*.

This first edition of our civic engagement newsletter explains our efforts to foster a strong relationship between residents and state government.

Massachusetts is on the move today because individuals from all walks of life, from Pittsfield to Provincetown, have answered the call to take responsibility for the well-being of our communities. As I travel around the Commonwealth, it becomes increasingly clear to me that people are prepared to roll up their sleeves and work to achieve their dreams. During a recent visit to Northampton, I learned local municipal and business leaders had identified sixteen buildings to be reviewed for potential cuts in energy costs and emissions reductions. While meeting with Boston-area teenagers about a recent outbreak in violence, I was struck by their request to form a Statewide Youth Council, which we established just a few weeks ago. In every corner of Massachusetts, people of all ages and backgrounds are doing their part to create a brighter future.

Our vision of a civically-engaged Commonwealth is moving forward, and the goal of this newsletter is to increase awareness of the many opportunities to serve, from the Commonwealth Corps to state boards and commissions. I hope you enjoy it, and I encourage you to take part in this vital conversation.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Commonwealth Corps is Coming	2
Answering the Call to Action	2
By the Numbers	2
Engaging the Next Generation	3
Governor's Office Internship Program	3
From the Executive Branch and Across the Commonwealth	4

Grassroots Governing

A vibrant, civically engaged statewide community that increases transparency and civic awareness, creates forums for policy discussion, and values citizens' opinions when they are shared, are all ways government can promote civic engagement.

A new department within the Governor's Office of Civic Engagement, Grassroots Governance, is focused specifically on broadening channels for participation and enhancing citizen voice in government. Public participation builds trust in government so people can work together to find the best solutions. This office will facilitate citizen input on addressing challenges such as

homelessness, transportation, education and the changing economy.

Over the next several months, the Governor and his Cabinet Secretaries will facilitate more citizen-driven engagement, recognizing citizens as partners in governance and community problem-solving. The Governor will also promote local civic renewal, encouraging neighbors to support neighbors to strengthen our Commonwealth.

For events you can participate in this month to share your opinion on important policies and connect with state agencies, please see page 4.

CHECK IT OUT!

Office of the Governor
www.mass.gov/governor

- Get up-to-date information on the Governor's key priorities.
- Utilize the constituent services section to get answers to common questions and obtain help when needed.
- Explore a rich Media Center with hundreds of videos and photos from events and speeches all over the Commonwealth.



Interagency Council on
Housing and Homelessness

The Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness, led by Lt. Governor Tim Murray, is charged with implementing the Plan to End Homelessness. It has established a Civic Engagement Working Group that will facilitate the involvement of communities and volunteers in homelessness prevention, promoting housing stability and asset development. For the latest updates, please check www.mass.gov/governor/ichh.

Commonwealth Corps is Coming

Watch for the Commonwealth Corps Request for Proposals in mid-May.



Members of the Commission represent some of the most civically engaged residents in the Commonwealth. The Commission is comprised of community leaders who are outstanding in all fields of service, from advertising to business, education, and service learning.

We would like to enthusiastically introduce to you the Commonwealth Corps program, launched this year by Governor Deval Patrick in partnership with the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA). We invite you to help raise awareness about this exciting service opportunity.

The mission of the Commonwealth Corps is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages and backgrounds in direct service to rebuild communities and address unmet needs. In 2007, Governor Patrick created the Commonwealth Corps as a way to connect the courage, drive, and idealism of the state's residents with the creative

and entrepreneurial work of local nonprofits and public entities. The Commonwealth Corps' inaugural class of 250 will serve in a full or part-time capacity, and will dedicate up to a year of service to participating organizations. Corps members will provide direct service, recruit, organize and mobilize additional volunteers and thus build a grassroots movement of volunteers.

Director Nancy Stolberg and Commonwealth Corps Coordinator Samantha Shusterman are working with the MSA and the Commonwealth Corps Commission to achieve the program's mission.

Non-profit and public entities are encouraged to apply to become Commonwealth

Corps sponsors to host a team of Corps members. The RFP will be issued on May 19th and will be accepted by the MSA until June 27, 2008. Applications will be available at <http://www.mass-service.org>.

Applications for individuals interested in being members of the inaugural class will be accepted in August.

For more information about the Commonwealth Corps, please visit

www.mass.gov/commonwealthcorps

BY THE NUMBERS

Appointments to boards and commissions: 646

Board appointees from outside Greater Boston: 53%

Board appointees of color: 27%

One-day marriage officiating permit: over 2,700

Governor's Office interns: 130

Commonwealth Corps membership goal for 2008: 250

SERV hours recorded (7/07-4/08): 13,636

Female Management-level hires in 2007: 53%

Answering the Call to Action

With more than 80,000 state employees and over 700 boards and commissions, Massachusetts is dependent on public service. Fortunately, many of the brightest and most passionate people from around the Commonwealth have already answered Governor Patrick's call to action.

Upon taking office last year, the Governor moved quickly to reinvigorate the public higher education system in Massachusetts. He reconstituted the Public Education Nominating Council. Led by renowned university leadership expert **Judith McLaughlin**, the Nominating Council is charged with seeking out committed and innovative candidates to serve as trustees of the Commonwealth's twenty five public higher education institu-

tions. During its first year, the Nominating Council has already advised the Governor on appointments to over eighty trustee positions, nearly a third of all such seats in Massachusetts. Thanks to the Nominating Council's efforts, the Governor has named trustees who care deeply about advancing their schools' missions, and who reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth and the service areas of each institution.

Another opportunity for civic engagement is to work full-time for the Commonwealth. The Governor is working to inject new energy into every corner of state government. One such example is the appointment of **Elver-roy Johnson** as the first African American State Librarian. The State Library is

charged with preserving Massachusetts government records and documenting the Commonwealth's storied history. Ms. Johnson's most extensive experience includes her recent position as Associate Vice President for Academic Resources at Wheelock College.

Through service in state government and on boards and commissions, Bay State residents have a tremendous opportunity to enhance our communities. If you are interested in working in state government, you can learn more about current opportunities at:

<https://jobs.hrd.state.ma.us/>

Engaging the Next Generation



Governor Patrick meets local school children at the Tobin Community Center in Roxbury to sign the Executive Order creating his Statewide Youth Council.

There is a new and innovative opportunity to involve young people in state government: the **Governor's Statewide Youth Council**. The goal of the Council is to encourage the Commonwealth's young people to become involved in their communities and to advise the Administration. The Council will focus on issues important to youth as well as the Governor's priorities of education, economic development, youth

violence prevention and civic engagement.

Planning for the Council began in 2007, during a visit to Codman Square in Dorchester, when the Governor met with teens to discuss the recent spate of violence in their communities and how best to address this issue. The young people asked the Governor to form a Statewide Youth Council, and he agreed to do so. In developing the concept for the Council, the Office of Community Affairs conducted extensive outreach. Between January and March of this year, planning meetings were held in Boston, Lowell, Worcester, and Springfield, and nearly one hundred community and faith-based organizations participated in the process.

The Youth Council will be comprised of 28 members

ages 14 to 20 representing the 14 counties in the Commonwealth, with two representatives per county. Participants will represent the diversity of young people across the Commonwealth. Each youth member, together with his or her adult sponsor, will also organize meetings in their local communities to assess which issues should be brought to the statewide council.

Selection of the council will be by application, available at www.mass.gov/governor/youthcouncil. Applications are due on May 30th and Council meetings will commence this fall.

If you would like to become involved, please contact the Office of Community Affairs at 617-725-4020.



On July 11, 2007 Governor Patrick addressed a crowd of some 1,600 state employees who were eager to get involved in their communities and volunteer their time at non-profit organizations and municipalities all over our Commonwealth.

This call to action was also put into practice by the Governor's Office including Governor Patrick, who has made regular visits to Horizons for Homeless Children.

Check out all of the one-time and longer term volunteer opportunities available to state employees at:

www.mass.gov/SERV

Governor's Office Internship Program

Through his internship program, Governor Patrick is calling on students to engage in public service and participate in government at work.

Our Spring 2008 class was no exception and they will be missed as their semesters come to a close.

Our summer class will begin on June 2nd.



Governor Patrick's Spring 2008 Interns

"Working in the Governor's Office made me feel a part of political life. After being a student of political science for so long, I became very disconnected from the political process. Interning in the State House renewed my interest and helped me realize how many people care and really want to change things for the better." —Megan McDonough, Spring 2008, Commonwealth Corps Intern

"I really enjoyed my internship experience with the Governor's Office. Everyone I've worked for and with here has been kind and supportive which created a great working and learning environment. I have learned a great deal and I truly appreciate the opportunity to be civically engaged from a different perspective." —Tracy Chang, Spring 2008, Civic Engagement Intern



Find a rewarding volunteer opportunity in your community today through this statewide volunteer web portal that connects citizens with organizations in their communities.

www.volunteersolutions.org/mass-service/volunteer/

From the Executive Branch and Across the Commonwealth

Public events being hosted by the Executive Offices include:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

MASSACHUSETTS



PARK SERVE DAY

Governor Patrick and Lt. Governor Murray invite you to join them for Park Serve Day 2008!

Saturday, May 17th

2006 Attendance: 20
2007 Attendance: 1,300
2008: Hope you can make it!

This year's event features more than 50 parks, from the Berkshires to Cape Cod, offering a wide range of volunteer opportunities.

For more information and sign up, please visit:
<http://parkserv.env.state.ma.us/>
or call 617-626-4980

Department of Transitional Assistance

The public is invited to join these Community Listening Sessions to share their ideas for the future of the Department and any news, facts, and impressions about poverty, homelessness, and hunger.

May 19—**Milford/** Workforce Central Career Center, 425 Fortune Boulevard, Milford
10am — 12pm

June 2—**Fall River/** SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc., 164 Bedford St. Fall River
10am — 12pm

June 16—**New Bedford/** UMass Dartmouth, New Bedford Campus, 800 Purchase Street 1st Floor Conference Room, New Bedford
10am — 12pm

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Secretary Suzanne M. Bump has launched a year long regional workforce strategy, called "Working Together - A Massachusetts Regional Workforce Strategy Initiative". The initiative is a statewide effort to build regional pipelines to prepare Massachusetts workers for high-demand jobs.

June 13—**Berkshire County:** Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams
10am — 12:30pm

June 18—**Hampden County:** Western New England College, Springfield
8:30am — 12:30pm

June 26—**Merrimack Valley/ Greater Lowell:** Riverwalk Conference Center, Lawrence
8:30am—11:30 am

<http://www.mass.gov/eolwd>

Department of Mental Health

May is Mental Health Month! DMH is hosting events all over the Commonwealth!

May 22—Citi-Wang Theater: Express Yourself: DMH "youth stars" will join professional performing artists from STOMP, Swingtown and renowned jazz musician, Stan Stickland. The performance begins at 6:45 p.m. and is free of charge and open to all.

May 24—DMH Essex North Site: "Immigration and Mental Health"

May 28—No. 1 Clarks Hill, Framingham: Celebrating May as Mental Health Month, Public Art Show

www.mass.gov

Keywords:DMH, events

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION

Green Line Extension to Somerville and Medford

www.GreenLineExtension.org

June 2—Project Advisory Group St. Clements High School, New Parrish Hall, 579 Boston Ave, Medford 4 — 6 PM

Urban Ring

<http://www.theurbanring.com/>

May/June—Public Meetings

I-495 Corridor Transportation Study

May 22 /27—Public Information Meeting

Hyannis Access Study

<http://www.hyannis-access.com/>

June 11—Public Meeting

Department of Public Health

Commissioner John Auerbach will convene the third round of Regional Health Dialogues in communities across the Commonwealth:

May 20—Metrowest: Quincy
Southeast: Plymouth

May 22—Greater Boston:
Chelsea

May 28—Metrowest: Waltham
Northwest: Lowell

www.mass.gov/dph/comm/health_dialogues.htm

Department of Mental Retardation

June 10—The 24th Annual Human Rights Conference, DCU Center, Worcester
8am — 4pm

www.mass.gov

Keywords:DMR, human rights

Office of Immigrants and Refugees

June 20—World Refugee Day Commemoration. This MAA Coalition event will include refugee speakers, legislative speakers, and cultural performances. Gardner Auditorium, State House, 11am — 12pm

Department of Elder Affairs

May is Older Americans' Month! Secretary Festa is traveling the Commonwealth to recognize the achievements of older residents and to identify emerging trends in elder care.

May 19—Older Americans' Month Recognition, State House Grand Staircase
1pm — 3pm

May 29—Secretary Festa delivers keynote address at Worcester County Elder Abuse Roundtable.